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PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWO THOUSAND AND NINETY-EIGHTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 26 November 1975, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. GHORRA (Lebanon)
Rapporteur: Mr. ARTEAGA ACOSTA (Venezuela)

- Economic and social consequences of the armaments race and its extremely harmful effects on world peace and security /31/ (continued)
- Implementation of General Assembly resolution 3254 (XXIX): report of the Secretary-General /34/ (continued)
- Napalm and other incendiary weapons and all aspects of their possible use: reports of the Secretary-General /35/ (continued)
- Chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons: report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament /36/ (continued)
- Urgent need for cessation of nuclear and thermonuclear tests and conclusion of a treaty designed to achieve a comprehensive test ban: report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament /37/ (continued) /...

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AS THIS RECORD WAS DISTRIBUTED ON 28 November 1975, THE TIME-LIMIT FOR CORRECTIONS WILL BE 3 DECEMBER 1975.

The co-operation of delegations in strictly observing this time-limit would be greatly appreciated.

- Implementation of General Assembly resolution 3258 (XXIX) concerning the signature and ratification of Additional Protocol II of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America (Treaty of Tlatelolco) /38/ (continued)
- Implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace: report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean /39/ (continued)
- World Disarmament Conference: report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the World Disarmament Conference /40/ (continued)
- General and complete disarmament /41/ (continued):
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- Implementation of the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa /43/ (continued)
- Comprehensive study of the question of nuclear-weapon-free zones in all its aspects: report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament /44/ (continued)
- Implementation of General Assembly resolution 3262 (XXIX) concerning the signature and ratification of Additional Protocol I of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America (Treaty of Tlatelolco): report of the Secretary-General /45/ (continued)
- Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East: report of the Secretary-General /46/ (continued)
- Prohibition of action to influence the environment and climate for military and other hostile purposes, which are incompatible with the maintenance of international security, human well-being and health: report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament /47/ (continued)
- Declaration and establishment of a nuclear-free zone in South Asia: report of the Secretary-General /48/ (continued)
- Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the South Pacific /120/ (continued)
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The meeting was called to order at 3.35 p.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 31, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 120, 122 and 126 (continued)

Mr. JAFFER (Pakistan): The position of the Pakistan delegation on the major issues on the agenda of disarmament items was stated here on 31 October by our Secretary for Foreign Affairs. For the present, therefore, I will restrict my remarks to some of those draft resolutions which you, Mr. Chairman, have indicated would come up for decision this week, namely: the draft resolutions in documents A/C.1/L.722 and A/C.1/L.723, concerning the nuclear-free zone in Latin America; A/C.1/L.719, concerning the South Pacific nuclear-free zone; A/C.1/L.727, concerning the economic and social consequences of the arms race; and A/C.1/L.725, on chemical and bacteriological weapons.

Members are well aware of our consistent support for the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones in various regions of the world as the most feasible alternative to prevent the dangers of nuclear proliferation at the present time. The Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America stands as a landmark in the recent history of disarmament efforts. It is also an example and model for the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones in other regions where efforts for the purpose are under way.

The success of the Treaty of Tlatelolco is of course in no doubt. But it will continue to face the danger of erosion so long as all the nuclear-weapon States and extraterritorial Powers do not undertake the obligations provided for in Protocols I and II to the Treaty. We do not believe that these obligations would in any way infringe the security or national interests of the nuclear Powers or of extraterritorial States.

My delegation joins the sponsors of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.723 in calling on the remaining extraregional countries to ratify Protocol I of the Treaty of Tlatelolco. We believe that difficulties of a legal or formal nature should not pose an insurmountable obstacle.

(Mr. Jaffer, Pakistan)

The ratification of Protocol II is of even greater significance for the effectiveness of the denuclearization régime in Latin America. The obligation of the nuclear-weapon States not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against the States parties to the Treaty is their most essential responsibility in view of the undertaking by the Latin American countries not to acquire nuclear weapons. My delegation hopes that by the time we meet next year the remaining nuclear-weapon State will have found it possible to ratify Protocol II of the Treaty of Tlatelolco.

It is a measure of the growing support for the idea of creating nuclear-weapon-free zones in various regions of the world that yet another such initiative has been taken, this time by New Zealand, Fiji and Papua New Guinea, for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the South Pacific. My delegation welcomes this proposal. We are confident that the countries of the region will find it possible in the near future to elaborate a viable régime for the zone and that all the nuclear-weapon States will accept the concomitant obligations involved in its establishment. The proposal for a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the South Pacific will complement the initiatives for similar zones in other regions of the world.

In our deliberations here, attention is rightly focused on the threat to peace and security posed by the continuing escalation in the armament race. However, the fact that the world spends over \$300 billion annually on armaments cannot but produce consequences for the social wellbeing and economic prosperity of nations and peoples. It is a sad commentary on our age that the world's expenditure on means of destruction should be almost 10 times that which is channelled into the amelioration of poverty and pestilence.

(Mr. Jaffer, Pakistan)

Realism tells us that the goal of diverting a substantial part of the expenditure on arms to economic and social development will not unfortunately be attained in the near future. But if it is ever to come about, it will be because the conscience of common people and the pressure of public opinion on Governments can no longer tolerate the present situation. An examination and study of the economic and social consequences of the arms race will be valuable in informing and educating public opinion. My delegation therefore welcomes the proposal submitted by Romania and several other countries in document A/C.1/L.725 calling on the Secretary-General to continue his study of the economic and social consequences of the arms race.

Hopes were aroused last year by the undertakings given by the United States and the Soviet Union in 1974 to reach agreement on an international convention dealing with chemical and bacteriological weapons. However, this eagerly awaited joint initiative was not forthcoming this year. We hope and pray that it will materialize soon. My delegation can therefore support the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.725. However, we wonder whether, in the light of all that has been stated in this Committee's debate about the absence of progress on disarmament, it would be justifiable to include the statement contained in the second preambular paragraph of the draft resolution. We would suggest that, in operative paragraph 6 of the draft resolution, it might be more appropriate to refer to the documents submitted on this question "during the current session of the Assembly" rather than to speak of "the documents of the First Committee".

My delegation will submit its views on the other draft resolutions at an appropriate stage.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the representative of Mexico to introduce the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.726.

Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): One of the items most frequently referred to in the general debate of this Committee on the disarmament items -- a debate which, as we know, concluded last Friday and during which we heard approximately 100 statements -- was the item on the urgent need to halt the arms race, and in particular the nuclear arms race, and to reduce world military expenditures. My delegation hopes to have an opportunity to deal with the question of the nuclear arms race at one of our forthcoming meetings devoted to the

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

presentation of draft resolutions and to an exchange of views on them. The purpose of my statement today is to introduce to the First Committee, on behalf of the delegations of Sweden and Mexico, the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.726 on agenda item 34, entitled "Implementation of General Assembly resolution 3254 (XXIX)", dealing with the reduction of the military budgets of States permanent members of the Security Council as well as any other State with comparable military expenditures.

In addition to recalling last year's resolution, the draft resolution notes with appreciation that the 1974 report of the Group of Consultant Experts on the Reduction of Military Budgets (A/9770) has been issued as a United Nations publication (E.75.I.10) and given wide distribution by the Secretary-General.

Similarly, reference is made to the report of the Secretary-General (A/10165 and Add.1), containing the views and suggestions of States regarding the matters covered in the report of the Group of Consultant Experts mentioned above. Thereafter, the following facts are emphasized in the draft resolution: first, that, considering the report of the Group of Consultant Experts, as well as the views and suggestions reflected in the report of the Secretary-General, it would seem advisable to continue studying the main questions related to this matter; secondly, the urgent need for States permanent members of the Security Council, as well as any other State with comparable military expenditures, to reduce their military budgets; thirdly, that part of the funds thus saved should be used to provide assistance for social and economic development, particularly of the developing countries.

In the penultimate preambular paragraph of the draft resolution, we reiterate the concern of the General Assembly at the fact that year after year world military expenditure continues to rise. As the Secretary-General pointed out in the introduction of his report on the work of the Organization, world military expenditures today amount to close to \$300,000 million per year and this figure represents an increase of 300 per cent over what the world spent in the initial years of the cold war.

In the last preambular paragraph of the draft resolution on which I am commenting, the conviction is expressed that, as indicated in the report of the Group of Consultant Experts, international security could be maintained with far lower general levels of world military expenditures than at present.

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

It clearly follows from what I have just said that the aim of the draft resolution is to combine immediate action with an in-depth study. Hence, the first two operative paragraphs appeal to all States, in particular the States permanent members of the Security Council, as well as any other State with comparable military expenditures, to strive to reach agreed reductions of their military budgets and urge the United States of America and the Soviet Union -- the two States with the highest levels of military expenditure in the world -- pending such agreement to carry out reductions of their military budgets.

(Mr. García Robles, Mexico)

The latter is neither new nor unprecedented, since, as is known, those two States, in 1963 and 1964, carried out reciprocal unilateral reductions under what was called a "policy of mutual example". There is no doubt that a repetition of that policy would not only contribute to lessening the pace of the arms race but would also have positive results as regards the success of the negotiations with the other permanent members of the Security Council and the other States referred to in operative paragraph 1. This opinion is not only shared by the vast majority of Member States of our Organization but has been expressed unequivocally by one of the permanent members of the Security Council, the United Kingdom, in whose reply to the enquiry contained in resolution 3254 (XXIX) we read the following:

"Economies of scale in research, development and production enjoyed by the two super-Powers mean that a crude percentage cut in the military expenditure of the permanent members of the Security Council would have a disproportionately severe effect on the other three permanent members." (A/1065, p. 33)

Operative paragraphs 3, 4 and 5 are intended to achieve the second of the two aforementioned objectives, namely, an in-depth study of the subject. Accordingly, the Secretary-General is requested, with the assistance of a group of qualified experts appointed by him, after consultations with Member States, to prepare a report containing an in-depth analysis and examination, in concrete terms, of a series of matters, with conclusions and recommendations. In particular, the report should emphasize the following matters:

"(a) The definition and scope of the military sector and of military expenditures, as well as the classifications and structuring of expenditures within the military budgets, with the over-all aim of achieving generally acceptable and universally applicable delimitations and definitions and a standardized accounting system, so as to permit effective comparisons of the military budgets;

(Mr. García Robles, Mexico)

"(b) The valuation of resources in the military sector, considering different economic systems and different structures of production within the military sector, with the purpose of examining methods concerning the relationships between resources and military output;

"(c) The deflation for price change in military production in different countries, with the aim of examining methods of measuring real expenditure trends over time, taking into account differences between countries in the rate of price change;

"(d) The international value comparison and exchange rates relevant to military production, with the purpose of examining methods for accurate currency comparison of military expenditures;"

(A/C.1/L.726, p. 2)

Since the requested report would be a most useful supplement to the one prepared in 1974, the Secretary-General might perhaps consider the possibility and the desirability of requesting, for the discharge of that task, the co-operation of those consultant experts who may be available among those who assisted him in the past.

The draft resolution urges all Governments to extend their full co-operation in providing all assistance that may be required for the efficient preparation of that report, which, as is stated in operative paragraph 6, is to be submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session.

Finally, the draft resolution contains a paragraph intended to inscribe on the provisional agenda of that session an item entitled, "Reduction of military budgets: implementation of resolution ... (XXX)"-- the number to be filled in.

It seems fitting, to illustrate the existing disparity between world military expenditures and the expenditures intended to improve the living conditions of the world population, to cite a few figures which are so eloquent as to need no comment.

The world spends approximately six to seven times more on military research and development than on medical research.

The average investment required for each soldier is approximately \$10,000 per year, while public expenditures on education barely amount to some \$200 per year for each school-age child.

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

In a world where more than 500 million human beings suffer from severe malnutrition, where 1,500 million have no access to effective medical care, where almost 1,000 million adults are illiterate, where there are less than 70 teachers and seven doctors for every 10,000 inhabitants, some \$300,000 million are spent every year, as I have already had occasion to point out, for war purposes. And all this military expenditure, what is spent by the permanent members of the Security Council and their allies represents about 80 per cent.

The representative of Sweden whose delegation joined mine in sponsoring the draft resolution which I have just introduced, reminded us here in her statement last Wednesday of what the Prime Minister of her country said when addressing the General Assembly on 11 November. I would like in conclusion to make a similar reference to what the President of Mexico said on 7 October, also at a plenary meeting of the Assembly:

"The arms race, with the incredible sums devoted to the manufacture and sale of weapons, is at one and the same time an unjustifiable squandering of resources and at the same time proof of the moral crisis afflicting those countries which base their progress on the industry of war and build the progress of key sectors of their economy on such an industry.

"More than anything else, disarmament is a true attempt at liberation: liberation of energy, liberation of resources, liberation of assets, of men of science and of workers. All these elements should then be diverted to a fruitful programme of action, of study and work that will hasten social transformation. ... If the enormous sums today being spent on armaments were channelled to the over-all development of the world, much would be done then to eliminate the conflicts which today darken the present and future of mankind." (A/PV.2377, pp. 17-18)

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Mexico for his introduction of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.726.

Mr. ROWE (Canada): I should like at this time to make a brief intervention with regard to the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/L.725 which the representative of Poland introduced in this Committee on 21 November on behalf of the delegations of Afghanistan, Argentina, Austria, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Finland, Hungary, India, Italy, Japan, Mongolia, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, Nigeria, Poland, Sweden, Ukrainian SSR and Yugoslavia. To that list, as you have already announced, Mr. Chairman, we welcome the co-sponsorship of Belgium and Cuba.

The Canadian delegation was pleased to participate in the consultations which took place on this draft resolution, a draft resolution which we believe reflects the widest range of views in this Committee concerning the negotiation of a convention to prohibit the development, production and stockpiling of all chemical weapons. As my delegation noted in our general statement of 4 November, Canada agreed that the Assembly should renew its request for negotiations within the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD) and should re-emphasize the priority which Member States assign to the conclusion of a convention prohibiting the use of chemical weapons. In our opinion, the draft resolution before us meets those requirements.

We concur, therefore, with the conclusion reached by the representative of Poland when he commended the draft resolution for adoption in this Committee by consensus. We also share the opinion that such a unanimous endorsement would be the best method by which we all could underline the importance attached by the General Assembly to achieving early progress on this issue.

The CHAIRMAN: I wish to announce that Jordan and Zaire have become co-sponsors of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/L.728 and that Jordan has become a co-sponsor of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/L.725.

Mr. LIN (Singapore): I should like to speak on the draft resolution on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the South Pacific, contained in document A/C.1/L.719, of which my-delegation is a co-sponsor.

(Mr. Lin, Singapore)

My delegation has sponsored this draft resolution for the following three reasons.

First, the draft resolution deserves our support, and my delegation believes that it will receive the support of the whole Committee, as it is a proposal which has been endorsed by all the countries which are members of the South Pacific Forum. My delegation is happy to note that this is consistent with an important principle contained in the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD) report on nuclear-weapon-free zones, which is that initiatives to create nuclear-weapon-free zones should come from countries within the region concerned.

Secondly, my delegation believes that the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the South Pacific can make a positive contribution to the peace and security of that region. The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones could be a very effective way of promoting and strengthening the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The creation of such zones would in no way be in conflict with the Non-Proliferation Treaty but would provide, in fact, a means for extending and reinforcing the objectives of the Treaty.

Thirdly, as the representative of Fiji pointed out to the Committee on 13 November, the South Pacific is

"... a region which has traditionally been free from man-made environmental pollution, the most dangerous of which is nuclear pollution."

(2085th meeting, p. 38)

(Mr. Lin, Singapore)

As the countries in the South Pacific depend for their sustenance not only on their land but also on their seas, it would be in their interest to ensure that their region remains free of nuclear weapons, and thereby nuclear pollution.

The zone, as envisaged by the sponsors of the resolution, has as its northern boundary the equator, and its southern boundary coincides with the northern boundary of the Antarctic Treaty area, that is, 60 degrees south. The New Zealand representative explained on 31 October that as for the eastern and western boundaries, these would be a matter for discussion and negotiation. My delegation endorses this view, as it believes that inclusion in the zone should be a wholly voluntary and sovereign act by the States concerned.

My delegation is mindful also of the fact that no nuclear-weapon-free zone can be effectively established if the nuclear Powers do not support the proposal. We therefore urge all the nuclear Powers to co-operate fully with the countries of the South Pacific in the realization of this goal. The New Zealand representative has rightly pointed out to this Committee, on 31 October, that

"Every region whose Member States have a common approach has the right to formulate proposals for regional disarmament and to expect the most careful and sympathetic consideration of such proposals by the international community." (A/C.1/PV.2074, p. 37)

As the proposal to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the South Pacific has the support of all the countries in the South Pacific Forum, and for the two other reasons already enumerated, my delegation strongly supports the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.719 and commends it to the Committee for adoption.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on the Under-Secretary of State of Sweden, Mrs. Thorsson, to introduce the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/L.732.

Mrs. THORSSON (Sweden): I have asked for the floor this afternoon in order to introduce under agenda item 41, "General and complete disarmament", a draft resolution on the strengthening of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament (A/C.1/L.732). The draft resolution is sponsored by the delegations of New Zealand, Romania, Sri Lanka, Tunisia, and Venezuela as well as my own delegation. I am happy to announce that the Philippines has also decided to join us as a sponsor.

The preambular paragraphs should be fully self-explanatory. They give the well-known reasons behind the urgent need to strengthen the role of the United Nations in our common search for disarmament, as outlined by the Secretary-General in the introduction to his annual report. We have noted that a large number of delegations have given these ideas their full support during our general debate. I therefore do not believe it necessary to go into a detailed explanation of the preambular paragraphs of the draft resolution.

I wish to draw particular attention to certain provisions in the operative part of the draft resolution. Operative paragraph 2 concerns the establishment of an ad hoc committee of the General Assembly open to the participation of all Member States. We consider that the question of disarmament is of direct concern to the whole world community. All States should therefore have an equal right to contribute to efforts to strengthen the role of the United Nations in disarmament and, with that purpose, to participate in the proposed review.

During our informal consultations it has been suggested that the United Nations Disarmament Commission might be the body to carry out the review. There are two main reasons why we have come to the conclusion that it would be more appropriate in this case to work through an ad hoc committee specially set up for this purpose. One is that the review -- as I have said repeatedly -- should not deal with the substance of disarmament, which has been and still is the main task for the Disarmament Commission. The other consideration lies in the strictly temporary character of the work envisaged for the review, something which might be less clear if the task were to be entrusted to a permanent body like the Disarmament Commission.

(Mrs. Thorsson, Sweden)

In operative paragraph 3 delegations will find outlined the three main areas on which the review should, inter alia, focus its attention. The first area covers new approaches for achieving more effective procedures and organization of work of the United Nations in the field of disarmament. The goal should be to let the United Nations exercise its full role in all universal disarmament efforts. This will in no way interfere with the process of negotiations on disarmament which are pursued in existing or future multilateral negotiating fora, as, for example, the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (CCD). On the contrary, a strengthening of United Nations activities in this field could give them new and improved inputs and thereby contribute to their effectiveness.

The second area concerns the role of the United Nations in the field of information. Much has already been said in this Committee on the inadequacy of the United Nations performance in this respect, and on the consequent need to expand information activities in the field of disarmament to correspond and better accord with the efforts which the United Nations already deploys in other important fields. The Member States and world public opinion could reasonably expect complete and objective information on disarmament from the world Organization. Through this, they will be able better to appraise the situation and the progress achieved.

In the third area the Review Committee should consider what can be done by the Secretariat to assist Governments on their request to follow up existing disarmament agreements. As I have already mentioned in my statement on 14 November it is essential to ensure that at any given time efforts in disarmament respond to changing realities both in the political and in the technological fields.

I would furthermore like to draw attention to operative paragraph 1. We believe that all Governments should have the opportunity to give the Secretary-General their views and suggestions relating to the review, so as to provide the Review Committee with useful material for its work.

In this connexion I would like to outline some very preliminary ideas on the organization of the work of the Review Committee, in response to questions to us from various delegations. Now this is, of course, a matter to be decided upon by the Review Committee itself. My very early views are, however, that it might be appropriate to have a first and short organizational session of the ad hoc committee already in January next year. At this session the Review Committee would

(Mrs. Thorsson, Sweden)

set up its bureau and decide on such things as the schedule of work. It would also be possible then to consider questions which might be put to Member States by the Secretary-General in accordance with operative paragraph 1, to solicit their views and suggestions on how best to strengthen the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament.

(Mrs. Thorsson, Sweden)

The first real working session would preferably be held in May or early June, a session which might be of two-weeks duration, when replies received from Governments would be available. A third and final session could then be held at the beginning of September next year, to allow the review committee to complete its work and finalize its report in time for the thirty-first session of the General Assembly. From this it should be perfectly clear that the mandate of the review committee would be of limited duration. We have every reason to believe that it will prove possible for the committee to fulfil its mandate by next September, as indicated in operative paragraph 5.

One obvious way of strengthening the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament would, of course, be to increase the capacity of the Disarmament Division of the United Nations Secretariat. We would strongly favour decisive steps in that direction. In my statement of 14 November I emphasized this by making a comparison between the financial implications of such steps and the exorbitant levels of military spending, particularly by the super-Powers. In other words, the cost could hardly be raised as a credible obstacle to proceeding with the strengthening of the Disarmament Division. The services of the ad hoc review committee and any other assistance requested by the Secretary-General for the comprehensive review of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament are likely to place an additional strain on the capacity of the Disarmament Division which, by the way, seems already to be stretched very far. Some strengthening of the Secretariat would therefore seem appropriate following the adoption of this draft resolution. In our view it would then be for the ad hoc committee carrying out the review process to identify further needs for increased capacity in the Secretariat. This is in conformity with what I have stated several times -- that in the current process of launching the review we should not in any respect prejudge its outcome.

The draft resolution is designed to give the United Nations a strengthened and renewed role in the field of disarmament. On behalf of the co-sponsors, I warmly recommend the draft resolution to the positive consideration of the First Committee. We hope it may be adopted unanimously.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Sweden for introducing the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.732.

Mr. MARTIN (United States of America): Yesterday, at our 2097th meeting, the representative of Mexico, on behalf of the Mexican and several other delegations, introduced a draft resolution (A/C.1/L.724) under agenda item 44, concerning the comprehensive study of nuclear-weapon-free zones conducted this year by a group of experts under the auspices of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament. With all due deference to our esteemed Mexican colleague, my Government thought it would be appropriate to express its strong opposition to the draft resolution at the earliest practicable moment. By adopting the draft resolution, the General Assembly would "solemnly proclaim" a declaration setting forth a definition of the nuclear-weapon-free zone concept, together with a definition of the principal obligations of nuclear-weapon States towards such zones and the States included in them. My delegation considers the draft resolution unacceptable in several respects, and will vote against it. I should like today to set out the principal reasons for that position.

One of the valuable contributions of the comprehensive study in document A/10027/Add.1 is that it clearly demonstrates that basic issues involved in the nuclear-weapon-free zone concept and in the question of the obligations of nuclear-weapon States towards nuclear-weapon-free zones are both highly complex and subject to widely divergent views. A "definition" of the nuclear-weapon-free zone concept that ignores those basic issues or glosses over them with generalities, as we believe the definition in the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.724 does, would hardly serve the interests of States wishing to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones in their regions. Indeed, by giving the false impression that key questions have already been answered, such a definition could mislead proponents of nuclear-weapon-free zone proposals.

Let us take just one example. The comprehensive study shows that many experts consider that a basic attribute of any nuclear-weapon-free zone should be the effective prohibition of the development by States within the zone of any nuclear explosive capability, for any purpose whatsoever. My Government strongly shares that view and would consider such a prohibition essential to the effectiveness of a zone. The proposed definition before us, however, does not even refer to this important question, nor does it acknowledge other important issues, such as the geographical scope of zones and the treatment of the question of transit. I have to question the utility of proclaiming such a definition, while ignoring complex underlying considerations.

My Government has made it clear that it will not commit itself to any particular set of undertakings towards a nuclear-weapon-free zone in advance of negotiation of specific arrangements for the zone. We have stated on more than one occasion that the United States would take into account the extent to which a particular zone arrangement meets several important conditions that we consider essential to its effectiveness, before determining the undertaking that we would be prepared to make. Thus we cannot accept the abstract assertion that the obligations stipulated in the proposed definition are an essential component of any nuclear-weapon-free zone.

My delegation questions the proposed definitions in and of themselves, as well as the utility of seeking universally valid definitions of the nuclear-weapon-free zone concept. Moreover, our strongest objections concern the implications of the draft resolution for the role, competence and authority of the General Assembly.

The proposed definition of the nuclear-weapon-free zone concept asserts that a basic requirement for a zone is its recognition as such by the General Assembly. That assertion has very serious implications. It states, in effect, that an agreement negotiated among a group of States does not become valid and cannot enter into force without the approval of this body. The draft resolution goes even further in saying:

"In every case of a nuclear-weapon-free zone that has been recognized as such by the General Assembly, nuclear-weapon States shall have the following obligations ..." (A/C.1/L.724, para. 1)

That says that the General Assembly has the power to impose upon States binding commitments -- commitments, indeed, that might fundamentally affect their security interests.

(Mr. Martin, United States)

But the General Assembly does not have the authority to impose such obligations either on parties to a nuclear-weapon-free zone arrangement or on outside States. The assumption of such obligations is necessarily a voluntary act of sovereignty, based on mutual agreement freely entered into among the States concerned.

The General Assembly can make an important contribution to the process of establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones, both by providing a forum for consultations and by adopting resolutions that encourage States to work towards specific arrangements. However, there is absolutely no justification in the United Nations Charter or international law for arguing that "endorsement" or "recognition" by the General Assembly can be either a necessary or a sufficient condition for entry into force of a nuclear-weapon-free zone or for the assumption of obligations towards the zone by States not located in the region.

It seems to us particularly unfortunate that this resolution should be presented before Member States have been given the opportunity to present their views on the issues raised in the comprehensive study.

My delegation has already indicated its support for a resolution inviting States to submit their views, and we are aware that a resolution along these lines is being prepared. We believe that the adoption of such a resolution would be a constructive action on this subject for the Assembly at this session.

On the other hand, adoption of the resolution presented by the representative of Mexico would be of little service to those considering the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone who must eventually come to grips with some of the controversial issues that are ignored by the proposed definitions, and it would represent a serious distortion of the role of this forum. It is with these considerations in mind that the United States will oppose the adoption of this resolution.

(Mr. Martin, United States)

We believe that this is an extremely important matter. We recognize the sincere desire of the sponsors to promote nuclear-weapon-free zones, but we must urge each member of this Committee to examine this resolution with great care to ascertain what implications it may have for its own vital national interests.

Mr. AMERASINGHE (Sri Lanka): Mr. Chairman, you caught me in the act of collecting my wits. I hope they are sufficiently in order to enable me to make a proper presentation to this Committee on the question of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace.

By way of preface, I should like to refer to the historical background of this proposal. It had a fairly long period of gestation -- seven years. In its original form, as suggested at the Cairo Summit of Non-Aligned Nations in October 1964, it was concerned with only one aspect of the problem, that is the treatment of the Indian Ocean area as a nuclear-weapon-free zone. It then developed -- at the Lusaka Non-Aligned Summit held in September 1970 -- into the idea of a peace zone which would be one not only free of nuclear weapons but also one from which great Power rivalries and competition would be excluded.

Presenting the proposal formally to the General Assembly at its twenty-sixth session on 12 October 1971, my Prime Minister, Mrs. Bandaranaike, in describing the concept, stated as follows:

"The concept of a zone of peace is inherent in the concept of non-alignment, which requires that the land territories, air space and territorial waters of non-aligned States must be closed to great-Power conflicts and rivalries."

She went on to state as follows:

"The proposal should not be regarded merely as part of a scheme of collective security confined to the Indian Ocean. On the contrary, it is intended as a direct and tangible contribution to the Disarmament Decade and to the strengthening of conditions for world peace."

(A/PV.1962, p. 3)

This is why we have consciously avoided getting this Indian Ocean peace zone mixed up with disarmament. It is not a disarmament item, as I said, though it makes a positive contribution in that direction, but more directed to establishing conditions of peace and security which would obviate the need for military alliances or for the acquisition of armaments by countries of the area or of the military presence of any great Powers in the area.

At its twenty-sixth session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 2832 (XXVI) by a vote of 61 in favour with none against, but with massive abstentions, amounting to 55. Abstentions have been described as an act of irresponsibility. I would not go so far. I would merely state that abstentions are often due to a lack of proper understanding, and I am sure that was the case in this instance.

The declaration, adopted on that occasion, solemnly declared:

"... that the Indian Ocean, within limits to be determined, together with the air space above and the ocean floor subjacent thereto, is hereby designated for all time as a zone of peace;"

In its second operative paragraph, it called upon the great Powers:

"... to enter into immediate consultations with the littoral States of the Indian Ocean with a view to:"

and here come the main elements of the declaration:

"(a) Halting the further escalation and expansion of their military presence in the Indian Ocean;

(b) Eliminating from the Indian Ocean all bases, military installations and logistical supply facilities, the disposition of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction and any manifestation of great Power military presence in the Indian Ocean conceived in the context of great Power rivalry;" (A/8429, p. 36)

(Mr. Amerasinghe, Sri Lanka)

The reason for the introduction of this proposal was that there were ominous signs of military rivalry in the Indian Ocean area between the two super-Powers, growing in intensity and thereby creating tensions within the area.

One super-Power is often criticized today for -- to use the jargon that is used today -- escalating its naval presence in the area. But it is forgotten that that escalation was its answer to the provocation offered by the presence in formidable shape of the other bloc which was a rival bloc. Any military presence of this nature must provoke a response from a bloc that feels threatened by the growth of that military presence.

It was to stop this that the proposal brought before the General Assembly and a declaration was presented to the General Assembly and adopted. It was not the intention of those who introduced this proposal that one Power should continue to remain in that area and exercise dominance over it or use it as its private lake. We wish to make it clear that we do not want either of the super-Powers in that area; in fact, we do not want any great Powers there. By the same token, we do not intend that we should drive out Satan by Beelzebub and allow some other Powers within the group of littoral and hinterland States to take the place of the super-Powers whom we have succeeded in getting rid of, if we do succeed in doing so. That is one misconception that I think it is necessary to allay and to dispel before we proceed to a proper examination of this question.

At the twenty-seventh session, resolution 2992 (XXVII) was adopted by a vote of 95 in favour, with none against and 33 abstentions. That resolution established the Ad Hoc Committee for the purpose of studying:

"the implications of the proposal, with special reference to the practical measures that may be taken in furtherance of the objectives of [the] resolution... having due regard to the security interests of the littoral and hinterland States ... and the interests of any other State consistent with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations".

Those who find it difficult to understand the purpose of this resolution and of peace zones should pay some attention to the last few words that I read out: "having due regard to the security interests of the littoral and hinterland States and the interests of any other State consistent with the purposes and principles of the Charter".

(Mr. Amerasinghe, Sri Lanka)

The next stage was reached in resolution 3080 (XXVIII), adopted at the twenty-eighth session by 95 votes in favour, none against and 35 abstentions. It again urged "all States, especially the major Powers, to extend their co-operation to the Ad Hoc Committee in the discharge of its functions", extended the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee, and, finally, requested the Secretary-General "to prepare a factual statement of the great Powers' military presence in all its aspects ... with special reference to their naval deployment, conceived in the context of great Power rivalry".

This information regarding the military presence of the Powers was not intended to embarrass anyone, but was required to enable the Committee to have a clear idea of the extent and scale of the foreign military presence in the area and its implications. It must know the dimensions of the problem in order to deal with it.

Last year, resolution 3259 A (XXIX) was adopted by 103 votes in favour, with none against and 26 abstentions. The resolution, while taking note of the report of the Ad Hoc Committee and of the factual statement of the Secretary-General, whose history I need not refer to here, endorsed the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee regarding its future work, which were that it should continue its efforts in terms of its mandate, proceed with its consultations with the permanent members of the Security Council other than one permanent member -- China -- which had co-operated with the Committee from its very inception. Its purpose was described in the following terms: "With a view to ascertaining their precise policy and position regarding the implementation of the Declaration". That was the only purpose of the consultations which were intended to be held with the permanent members of the Security Council.

The Committee was also asked to give priority attention during 1975 to definitions such as the limits of the Indian Ocean for the purpose of the implementation of the Declaration, and other concepts such as foreign military bases, military installations, logistical supply facilities and so forth, not to mention the definition of "littoral and hinterland States". It was also asked to consider convening as early as possible a conference of littoral and hinterland States, and requested littoral and hinterland States to enter into consultations regarding a conference on the Indian Ocean. Finally, it invited all States, especially the great Powers, to co-operate in a practical manner with the Ad Hoc Committee.

(Mr. Amerasinghe, Sri Lanka)

The history of the proposal indicates the evolution of a new law, a law of diminishing returns and even increasing support, paradoxical though it may seem.

During 1975, the Ad Hoc Committee held seven meetings and we also held informal consultations among the littoral and hinterland States. The littoral and hinterland States were, for the purposes of these consultations, asked to give their views on six points regarding the convening of the proposed conference on the Indian Ocean, namely: the purposes of the conference; the date and duration; its venue; the provisional agenda; the question of participation, whether it was to be limited to littoral and hinterland States only or to include the great Powers and major maritime users as well; and, finally, the level of participation.

Through 1974 attempts were made by me in my capacity as Chairman to obtain the co-operation of the great Powers through oral communications. Perhaps what would have been more appropriate would have been oral respiration. Finally, having failed over a period of one year to engage their interest or attention, the co-operation of the great Powers and major maritime users was sought by a letter dated 10 June 1975 which was addressed to them by me in my capacity as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, seeking their views in regard to the implementation of the Declaration so far as their security and other interests were concerned, and the best means of advancing towards the objectives of the Declaration with modifications that may be necessary to reconcile differing views and interests. I could not conceive of a more innocuous form of presenting our position to them and seeking their co-operation.

(Mr. Amerasinghe, Sri Lanka)

It might be surprising to some, but not to all, to learn that the four great Powers did not even deign to send a reply in writing; they thought an oral reply was sufficient in response to a written communication. The rules of etiquette seem to be different in different places. However, finally, under some pressure, a couple of them did choose to risk putting down their objections in writing, or their reasons for not being able to co-operate with us. One great Power, I regret to say, has not favoured us either with an oral reply or a written reply, but with comments made at cocktail parties, to which I do not pay much attention. This response has been most disappointing, coming as it has from the "holy trinity" -- the United States, the United Kingdom and France -- which in this instance added a fourth to its number, the Soviet Union. The attitude of the Soviet Union and its desire to join the "holy trinity" is understandable, of course. But what we cannot understand is the glacial indifference shown by these four Powers to countries whose support they earnestly seek for every type of resolution that they bring forward, however remote it may be from the goal of disarmament. Perhaps they will learn to regard others with the same forbearance and respect that they expect from those others.

As regards the major maritime users, one, namely Japan, has from the very start co-operated with the Ad Hoc Committee. The others belonging to the formidable minority, the European club, have not chosen to reply because they fear that in some way or other this will interfere with the freedom of the high seas. Apparently they have not read the declaration carefully. Had they done so, they would have noted that we have no intention of interfering with the peaceful uses of the ocean. As for other uses which they consider as falling within the concept of the freedom of the high seas, we have differed from them because what they want is not freedom but licence.

(Mr. Amerasinghe, Sri Lanka)

Some great Powers regard the Indian Ocean peace zone concept as a disarmament measure -- I referred to that earlier -- and therefore as falling within the framework of general and complete disarmament. If we want to give it a decent burial, certainly we will entrust it to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament. But we want to keep it alive. They also, as I said earlier, seem to view the Indian Ocean peace zone as a threat to the traditional concept of freedom of the high seas. I have replied to that point already. As I have already said, we regard the Indian Ocean peace zone concept not as a disarmament measure, in the negative sense, but as a positive contribution to the strengthening of regional and international peace and security, and as one step towards the larger concept of universal collective security without major alliances.

I am sure that no member of the group of littoral and hinterland States wishes to be present at the obsequies that have been proposed to us, by their conduct, by the great Powers.

I should like to assure this Committee that what we are seeking is not the conversion of the Indian Ocean into a private lake with special rights or privileges for the littoral and hinterland States, but rather the assumption by all States, littoral and non-littoral, through international agreement, of certain restraints in the interests of both regional and global security. Such internationally agreed restraints cannot be determined unless there is active consultation between the States of the region and those outside it. Hence the need for an understanding of the interests and problems of all States, particularly the great Powers and the major maritime users. It is unreasonable for the great Powers and the major maritime users to ask the littoral and hinterland States to agree among themselves in the first instance on what they want before they can expect co-operation of the great Powers with the littoral and hinterland States. What we want may differ widely from what they will be prepared to agree to. We need not go through the painful process of agreeing among ourselves only to discover that they reject entirely what we offer them. It is a much simpler operation if they came in from the very start, that is, if they believe in the Charter principle of co-operation, and gave us the benefit of their advice and explained to us exactly how far they thought we should attempt to go.

(Mr. Amerasinghe, Sri Lanka)

The consultations among the littoral and hinterland States have succeeded in disclosing a certain amount of general agreement. Of course, there is a consensus that the conference should be held; but we have not yet succeeded in agreeing on other points, such as the venue, the purpose of the conference, the duration and the date. It is for this reason that we have proposed that our mandate should be extended and that we should be given further time to prepare for the conference. There is complete agreement that the conference should not be held without full, proper and adequate preparation, and this process will have to be gone through in the next year if the draft resolution, which appears in paragraph 31 of the report, document A/10029, is adopted.

There are other important questions, such as the definition of certain terms, on which we are still holding consultations, questions, as I mentioned earlier, such as what would constitute a military base. At a recent meeting at which I happened to be present -- and it is no secret -- the Lima Conference of Foreign Ministers of the non-aligned movement, an attempt was made to refine the term "military bases" into "imperialistic military bases".

(Mr. Amerasinghe, Sri Lanka)

I must say quite clearly that, although we were a party to the Declaration issued by the Lima Conference, we did not agree that there was any such thing as an "imperialist military base". In our opinion, any military base that is not operated by a country with its own resources and on its own territory is imperialistic. As I say, any other base but those established in a country with its own resources, operated under its own authority and in its own territory is an imperialist base. We felt that to try to distinguish between foreign bases by putting them into two categories -- imperialistic and non-imperialistic -- was far too tendentious for us to accept.

However, that problem has been avoided by speaking of "foreign and imperialistic military bases". That does not make the position any better.

That is all I wished to say in commending the draft resolution to the Committee. However, I must make a final appeal to the four great Powers -- or the four musketeers -- and the other major maritime users, except for China and Japan, kindly to think again about their duty to this Organization and towards the establishment of international peace and security. Their duty is clear and it is to encourage instead of to discourage all measures that are taken in all honesty and good faith to promote international peace and security.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Sri Lanka for introducing the report in document A/10029 on item 39, entitled "Implementation of the Declaration on the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace", and for the draft resolution proposed by the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean. I should like to take this opportunity to express the appreciation of the Committee to Ambassador Amerasinghe for his chairmanship of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean and to the members of that Committee for their report and recommendations.

Mr. MATIN (Pakistan): On behalf of the Pakistan delegation, I should like to thank Ambassador Amerasinghe for the outstanding report which he just submitted to the Committee. Those of us who have had the privilege of working with him on the Ad Hoc Committee are aware of the sagacity and statesmanship with which he has been steering the course of our deliberations. We owe it to his leadership that the Committee was able to produce an excellent document and to succeed in putting up a unanimously agreed upon draft resolution. My delegation wishes to place on record that his personal dedication, insight and experience contributed to the effective manner in which the Ad Hoc Committee was able to discharge its functions and responsibilities. We should also like to commend the staff of the Secretariat, particularly Mr. Corradini and his colleagues, for their performance and zeal in the work of the Ad Hoc Committee.

The Pakistan delegation commends the report contained in document A/10029 and supports the draft resolution before the Committee. We are glad to see that the report faithfully reflects the concerns, interests and viewpoints of the littoral and hinterland States. The objectivity in which intricate issues were tackled evokes our appreciation and sense of welcome.

The series of discussions which we held in the Ad Hoc Committee over the year clearly brought out the fact that peace in the region is conditioned by exogenous as well as endogenous factors. The impact of external forces is often linked with the repercussions of internal variables. Hence the regional States must be assured against threats from within as well as without.

Pakistan has always associated itself with the view that the presence of the great Powers and the competition among them in the Indian Ocean act as a destabilizing element in the region. The military presence and big-Power rivalry in the Indian Ocean can bring pressure to bear upon States of the region, influence their actions and provide an opportunity to intimidate them and even interfere in their internal affairs. This is the basis of the idea of banning the presence of outside Powers and their nuclear weapons from that ocean.

The elimination of great-Power presence and restraining the escalation of their naval and military build-up require, however, that the littoral and hinterland States put their own house in order and take steps to ensure an atmosphere of security in the region. The idea of a peace zone loses some of its force and

(Mr. Matin, Pakistan)

may in practice become difficult to implement in the absence of proper conditions of security and self-restraint at the regional level.

The arrangements for security among the littoral and hinterland States could be established through a political régime and expressed in the form of a code of conduct to guide the relations among the Indian Ocean States. An important element of such a code would be an agreement among the major littoral States to maintain a reasonable ratio in their naval and military forces as well as an undertaking not to acquire or introduce nuclear weapons into the region.

In our memorandum to the Ad Hoc Committee, we spelled out the essential ingredients of the legal and political régime reflected in a code of conduct to guide relations among the littoral and hinterland States and to establish a viable system of security.

We hope and trust that the proposed conference will go into the matter in depth as and when it is convened.

My delegation is confident that the fruitful and rewarding process of dialogue and consultation which the Ad Hoc Committee has initiated on the convening of a conference on the Indian Ocean will be carried forward during the year ahead. We firmly believe in and adhere to the concept of a peace zone in the Indian Ocean. It would be our privilege to co-operate with the Ad Hoc Committee as well as other agencies in finding out concrete ways and means whereby the concept can be advanced and ultimately translated into reality. Pakistan is vitally interested in safeguarding the region from inherent dangers of strife and insecurity. We shall constantly and untiringly work for the materialization of the political will expressed by the world community in its Declaration during the twenty-sixth session of the General Assembly and subsequent resolutions on the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace.

Mr. AL-SHAIKHLY (Iraq) (interpretation from Arabic): At its twenty-sixth session the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution declaring the Indian Ocean a zone of peace, and at the twenty-seventh session it was decided to establish an Ad Hoc Committee to review the implementation of that Declaration. Iraq has attached particular importance to the question of declaring the Indian Ocean a zone of peace and has announced its interest in this respect on several occasions, in view of the great significance we attach to that region, on the one hand, and to the fact that it has a direct impact on Iraq due to the developments which take place there, on the other hand. Moreover, the Foreign Minister of Iraq, in his address before the General Assembly at its present session, asserted Iraq's support for that Declaration.

Our understanding of the concept of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace is based on our view that that zone should be denuclearized and should be removed from big-Power rivalry. This can be accomplished by ending the military presence of those States in the region and by eliminating pacts and foreign military bases from the area. In that way it would be easy to declare the Indian Ocean a zone of peace as a measure to strengthen international peace and security and to help put an end to the arms race and the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

In its resolution 3259 (XXIX) the General Assembly requested

"... the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean to enter, as soon as possible, into consultations with a view to convening a conference on the Indian Ocean".

On this occasion, my delegation would like to express its appreciation for the constant efforts exerted by the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean in this respect in order to enter into the necessary consultations with the countries concerned and with those countries which use the waters of the Indian Ocean. Iraq, appreciating the importance of that conference, and convinced that it has valuable objectives, would like once more to declare itself in favour of the holding of that conference, and its readiness to host it in Baghdad, the capital of Iraq. We are also pleased to reaffirm that this invitation will remain valid until such time as the circumstances have been created for the convening of the conference.

(Mr. Al-Shaikhly, Iraq)

My delegation also notes that, in spite of the fact that some progress has been achieved in the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean, the subject still requires greater efforts and closer co-operation, on the part of both parties directly concerned, in the implementation of the United Nations resolution on the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace. Unfortunately, we have noticed that, in spite of the lapse of some time, we are still awaiting an initiative by the big Powers to co-operate in this respect and to fulfil the purposes of the Declaration; and here we have to refer frankly to the negative attitude of the United States towards the activities of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean, on the one hand, and in its efforts to escalate its military presence in the Indian Ocean, on the other hand -- a fact which is reaffirmed by the United States decision to expand its naval and air bases in Diego Garcia, in the heart of the Indian Ocean, thereby reconfirming that this irresponsible policy is likely to hinder the efforts of the United Nations, and of countries of the Indian Ocean, to fulfil the objectives of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace.

As we announce our support for the draft resolution before the Committee, we should like to reaffirm that the United Nations, and particularly the big Powers, in view of their various responsibilities, have to be committed to these resolutions and to work seriously towards their implementation.

Mr. ALLEN (United Kingdom): I address myself today to the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.724, under item 44, the comprehensive study of the question of nuclear-weapon-free zones in all its aspects.

Speaking in the general debate on 13 November, I said that my Government believed that this study had been worthwhile and that we regarded it as natural, and even healthy, that it should contain a number of differing views. We support the suggestion made recently by the representative of Finland, that the study should be submitted to Governments for comments.

Moreover, the United Kingdom has taken practical steps to support the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones by acceding to Additional Protocols I and II of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, undertaking thereby not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against the contracting parties to the zone. So the support of my Government for the concept of nuclear-weapon-free zones is, I trust, not in doubt.

Nevertheless my delegation cannot support the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.724, and in fact will vote against it. We shall vote against it in order to leave no possible grounds for misunderstanding of the United Kingdom position. One element in our decision to vote against it is that, in recent years, even when abstentions were accompanied by strong explanations of vote, they have often been later misrepresented as not having indicated dissent. We want our position to be clear beyond any doubt, misrepresentation or misunderstanding.

We find the draft resolution unacceptable, on grounds of both principle and substance. Our main objection to it is that it purports to have a binding law-making character in laying down definitions with legal effect, rather than being of a recommendatory character. The well known view of my delegation is that, with certain exceptions which are not relevant here, resolutions of the General Assembly are, under the Charter, no more than recommendatory. It follows that we cannot accept a resolution which contains provisions where binding treaty language is implied -- a resolution which purports also to impose permanent obligations on sovereign States.

(Mr. Allen, United Kingdom)

Moreover, in definition I, the intention appears to be to make "recognition" by the General Assembly a constitutive element in the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone. This again ascribed to the General Assembly law-making functions which, in my Government's view, it does not have.

An equally serious objection is that this draft resolution embodies the theory that sovereign States can be required to accept legally binding obligations towards other States in advance of knowing what those obligations will entail. I will only repeat briefly that my Government would certainly not accept obligations of the kind proposed in cases where, for example, it believed that its security, or that of its allies, would be diminished, or where attempts were made to restrict the rights of States to freedom of navigation on the high seas or through international straits, or where the statute of denuclearization would allow the indigenous production of so-called peaceful nuclear explosive devices.

As I made clear in my statement of 13 November, my Government will examine sympathetically all proposals for nuclear-weapon-free zones submitted by groups of sovereign States to this Assembly. But it is quite unacceptable -- and, I would also suggest unrealistic -- to expect any Government to, in effect, sign a blank cheque giving undertakings in advance of knowing exactly what is involved.

Mr. de GUIRINGAUD (France) (interpretation from French): I should like to begin with a small personal comment of a friendly nature. This morning I was at a meeting at which the representative of the Soviet Union, Ambassador Roschin, reproached me with not appearing sufficiently frequently in this Committee and not having yet spoken on disarmament. I told him that I was bearing in mind his comment and that this very day I would be coming to speak in this Committee. I am not sure whether he took me seriously this morning, but here I am and I am ready to make a statement to you on behalf of my Government.

The French representative had occasion during the general debate in this Committee to outline some preliminary views on the problem of nuclear-weapon-free zones: although we doubt the effectiveness of such zones in the event of a generalized nuclear conflict, we cannot but approve the voluntary undertaking they entail for the countries forming these zones, not to acquire nuclear weapons. Also, we understand perfectly well the desire of these States to remain, if possible, untouched by a nuclear war and its disastrous consequences, and also their desire to arm themselves with legal instruments calculated to prevent them from becoming involved in such nuclear exchanges. We are therefore following with sympathy any efforts they may make along these lines. It is in that spirit that we finally agreed, in spite of the reservations we had regarding certain provisions of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Arms in Latin America, to subscribe to Protocol II to that diplomatic instrument, defining the attitude of the nuclear Powers towards it.

Today the problem of nuclear-weapon-free zones has become particularly relevant and assumed greater scope; seven items on our agenda are devoted to this subject. An exhaustive study of this subject was made in a report drawn up by the Ad Hoc Group of Qualified Governmental Experts under Professor Korhonen, and my Government was impressed by the objective and constructive approach of that report.

Apart from draft resolutions of a general nature, our Committee has before it draft resolutions relating to the establishment of four separate nuclear-weapon-free zones: in Africa (item 43), in South Asia (item 48), in the South Pacific (item 120) and in the Middle East (item 46).

(Mr. de Guiringaud, France)

We know that ideas have been put forward on the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in other parts of the world; these projects are still in outline or at an embryo stage, but will one day require the attention of our Organization.

In the circumstances I believe it is appropriate for my delegation to explain the principles upon which the French Government will base its views of these present or future projects.

These principles are in keeping with my country's traditions of freedom and independence and with the accepted notions of international law. To repeat the formulations contained in the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, the French Government remains firmly attached to the principle that States will respect each other's sovereign equality and individuality as well as all the rights inherent in its sovereignty, including in particular the right of every State to juridical equality and territorial integrity. From these premises the French Government draws the conclusion that in the area of national defence each State has the right to acquire the military equipment it deems necessary for its security and the maintenance of its independence, with due regard for existing treaties and rights, particularly the right of self-defence laid down in Article 51 of the United Nations Charter.

It goes without saying -- but it is even better to say so -- that the French Government fully recognizes the right of States of a given geographical region to form denuclearized zones. Furthermore, the French Government, while it has not signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty for reasons it has had occasion to explain in detail, was and still is in favour of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, and has very clearly indicated its intention of doing nothing that might encourage such proliferation.

We cannot be opposed, therefore, to the principle underlying the establishment of zones within which the participating Governments would undertake not to acquire nuclear weapons. I would, however, make four comments with regard to the establishment of denuclearized zones.

(Mr. de Guiringaud, France)

Firstly, the initiative for creating denuclearized zones should come from the States of the zone and should be accepted by all the States concerned. That follows from the right of sovereignty which a State exercises fully and entirely, particularly in matters of defence. The French Government considers that the status of denuclearization cannot be imposed on a State which refuses to become a party to it and my country has no intention of exerting pressure on any State that might wish to remain outside such a zone.

Secondly, States which form a nuclear-weapon-free zone are absolutely free to determine among themselves any arrangements they may agree to: there cannot be, in our view, any standard arrangement of a binding nature. While acknowledging the excellence of the Treaty on the denuclearization of Latin America, we believe that although it remains a model and an example, it is an example from which countries should be free to depart. Future denuclearized zones may be located in regions very different in geographical or political terms: in some cases flexible provisions will be the most appropriate, while in others more restrictive measures may seem more advisable.

(Mr. de Guiringaud, France)

It is for the States concerned to make up their mind. My Government has no objection to denuclearized zones being different from one another, even in important respects.

Thirdly, in assessing the establishment of denuclearized zones, the French Government will take into account a criterion which it considers significant: the presence within these zones of all the important military Powers in the region concerned.

Fourthly, my last comment is really a wish. If, as is sometimes the case in this Committee, my delegation is being asked to take a stand, albeit a preliminary one, on the establishment of a denuclearized zone, we would like at the same time to be given precise information as to the area of territorial application and the proposed limits of the zone concerned.

These are the principles which will guide my Government in its assessment on any draft relating to a denuclearized zone with regard to relations among the States which would belong to such a zone. These principles are principles which my Government would also like to have applied to itself. It is not ready to agree that treaties concluded between other countries should ipso facto affect its own rights. It proclaims its firm attachment to the principle that treaties only have effects for parties to them.

In the relevant areas which concern us today, we therefore draw the following conclusions: first, the denuclearization régime established by a treaty cannot affect the status of territories under the sovereignty of France which may be geographically located within a denuclearized zone. Nor could the French Government accept injunctions from other States with a view to compelling it to agree to a denuclearization status for all or part of the territories under its sovereignty. Finally, the rights possessed by France under conventional or customary international law with regard, first, to zones outside the jurisdiction of States -- particularly the high seas and also straits -- cannot be affected and can in no way be modified by treaties to which France is not a party.

(Mr. de Guiringaud, France)

These views state the preliminary conditions which we intend to formulate if we were to be requested as a nuclear Power to enter into certain commitments or to give certain guarantees to countries constituting a denuclearized zone.

We fully understand the desire of these States to obtain from the nuclear Powers commitments of this type. Without them, the establishment of a denuclearized zone would lose something of its appeal and significance. It is indeed our very understanding of these concerns, which seem legitimate to us in principle, which has prompted us to state now our way of looking at this problem in the interests of these countries themselves.

Of course, the French Government does not consider itself bound by any a priori obligation with regard to countries constituting denuclearized zones. It seems to my delegation that some statements made in this Committee and certain draft resolutions before us refer to concepts with which we cannot agree -- in particular, when it is claimed that it is incumbent upon nuclear Powers to give guarantees to the countries of the zone in every case.

I want to make it very clear, in the hope of avoiding any possible misunderstanding, that my Government reserves its right to assess each particular case and will consider first whether the granting of such guarantees to any given group of States is compatible with the requirements of its security.

If this is indeed the case -- and in most cases it should be -- the French Government is ready, if the interested States so require, to enter into certain commitments towards them. It will be ready to this end to embark on negotiations with these States in a spirit of goodwill, in order to strengthen international peace and security, in keeping with the principles laid down in the Charter. I would add that this requirement does not seem to me to be excessive. It is entirely in keeping with the diplomatic tradition that a country asked for a commitment should be able to discuss the substance and the formulation of such a commitment. It is the reverse procedure which is in fact paradoxical, a procedure whereby countries would discuss among themselves obligations which they wish to ask other Powers to assume. I must warn the Committee against a tendency which, if certain preliminary signs are anything to go by, may come to prevail in the area of concern to us. I would like to

point out here that the French Government is not ready to subscribe to treaties, conventions or protocols submitted to it without having had a chance to discuss them.

I have been at pains to make myself as clear as possible, in order to avoid any subsequent misunderstanding. But I would like this statement to be understood as evidence of our attitude of understanding and goodwill towards a problem so important, as we know, to so many Members of our Assembly.

In this matter as in others, my country is above all concerned not only for the independence of all States but for the preservation of international security, the primary goal of our Organization.

Mr. KEVIN (Australia): The purpose of my intervention this afternoon is to comment on the draft resolution relating to the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace, which my country has the honour of co-sponsoring as a member of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean, which draft resolution was so ably introduced this afternoon by Ambassador Amerasinghe of Sri Lanka. Australia has been a member of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean since its establishment three years ago. We continue to believe that the Committee has performed a useful function as a forum for the exchange of views on how we might move towards the objective of establishing and maintaining the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace and also in generating a momentum towards that end. A number of interesting statements have been made this afternoon in connexion with the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace and, rather than wait for the draft resolution to be put to the vote, I thought it might be appropriate to speak today myself.

I have been instructed by my Government to reiterate here the position that my country took in response to the letter addressed by the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee to the Governments of the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean concerning the holding of a conference on the Indian Ocean. The essence of the Australian Government's position on the matter of a conference is reflected in paragraphs 8 and 9 of the Ad Hoc Committee's report (A/10029). Australia believes that the proposed conference should be convened only after thorough preparation designed to pave the way for its successful outcome. We attach importance to the achievement of an adequate consensus on the aims and objectives of the conference, which should further the cause of peace and stability in the Indian Ocean, before any date for the convening of the conference is considered. My Government stresses the need for a consensus, and we believe that the consensus should involve, in addition to the littoral and hinterland States of the region, the great Powers and the major maritime users of the Indian Ocean. It is on that basis that Australia supports the continuation of consultations with a view to the convening of a conference which are called for in this year's draft resolution, and we shall be taking part in those consultations both as a member of the Ad Hoc Committee and as one of the littoral and hinterland States of the Indian Ocean.

(Mr. Kevin, Australia)

The remarks I have just made will, I think, have put into a particular perspective of importance the very reasonable and cogent appeal made this afternoon by the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean for a more forthcoming and more positive attitude to its task on the part of the countries he described as the four musketeers.

The position of Australia on this subject is very clear and, indeed, was reflected in our general debate statement in this Committee on 7 November. We have urged, and will continue to urge, the major Powers to attempt to exercise mutual restraint against the expansion of their military and naval competition in that area of the world, an area which has hitherto, fortunately, been relatively free of great Power competition. As we said on 7 November, we believe that mutual arms limitation measures can have a regional as well as a global dimension, and we would welcome a more positive attitude to the objective of establishing the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace on the part of the major Powers.

I think the points I have mentioned indicate the basis of Australia's support, which is wholehearted, for the draft resolution as it now appears in the report of the Ad Hoc Committee.

Mr. ROSSIDES (Cyprus): Among the documents relating to the many agenda items concerning disarmament we are considering at least two studies by consultant experts and reports of at least three Committees, one on a world disarmament conference, one on the Indian Ocean as a nuclear-free zone and one on a study of the role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament. We are very appreciative of the efforts made in this direction, and I would refer in particular to the draft resolution (A/C.1/L.732) proposed by New Zealand, Romania and other countries and really initiated by the representative of Sweden. We greatly appreciate what has been done by Sweden over the years towards disarmament. It has played a very leading role in the efforts to halt the arms race and bring about disarmament and we look upon the draft resolution with great respect as part of that effort.

(Mr. Rossides, Cyprus)

We also have before us the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.727, the moving spirit behind which was the representative of Romania. That draft resolution is, of course, very relevant to disarmament and the arms race. It calls attention to the economic and social consequences of the arms race, apart from its extremely harmful effects on world peace and security. That also is a very commendable draft resolution in every respect.

I should like with your permission, Mr. Chairman, and the indulgence of this Committee to draw an over-all picture of disarmament efforts over 25 years, not to mention earlier efforts, that have not led to any results and in any case have not halted or even reduced the arms race which, since -- and in the course of -- those valuable negotiations, has increased and is escalating, to astronomical figures of expenditure. The Romanian proposal in the draft resolution for a study by consultant experts of the economic consequences of the arms race, calls attention to the fact that since the report was made by the Secretary-General there have been new developments that render the halting of the arms race imperative. Those new developments are obviously meant, as part of the new world economic order that is emerging out of the seventh special session of the General Assembly.

All this points to one thing: that the arms race must be halted. The purpose of the study of the economic consequences of the arms race is, further, to emphasize and bring before world public opinion the effects of the arms race, while not forgetting but emphasizing the aspect of international peace and security. All this emphasis upon the evils of the arms race is necessary and timely to create public awareness of the grave consequences involved. But I would say in all humility, that something more is needed. Of course we all know the terrible effects of the arms race. The big Powers themselves, involved in the arms race, know in their hearts and minds that it is a negative and destructive process; but they presumably cannot stop it. What are the means that can possibly be provided towards the cessation of the arms race?

(Mr. Rossides, Cyprus)

It should further be noted that in the draft resolutions emphasis is laid on the need to have the United Nations central to the disarmament effort -- central, that is, in the effort to stop the arms race. We are thus coming closer to the target that should be set to that end. The means of stopping the arms race lies in the role the United Nations can play. May I ask the Committee's indulgence in looking into the possibly effective role of the United Nations in this respect.

To do this we had better look at the Charter. The authors of the Charter had the wisdom to realise that the most essential requirement to prevent war and the preparations for it through the arms race was to provide the means for establishing a measure of international security, which they considered as a primary responsibility and function of the Organization. Nations cannot be expected to cease arming themselves in the absence of an alternative security to that armament, which can only be found in international security through the United Nations. Hence, the arms race continues escalating in the competitive arming of nations. This negative process has been intensified of late following upon events that made manifest the complete lack of international security, making armaments necessary, as was pertinently remarked by the President of Austria. Because of these developments the need for effective international security through the United Nations becomes more basically necessary in order to facilitate the disarmament effort.

May I suggest that in the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/L.727 -- which deals with the economic consequences of the arms race -- in its operative paragraph 2 where it refers to the need of "taking into account any new developments ..." the following words may be added, namely, "including the possibilities now of international security through the United Nations as an alternative to armaments". This phrase is necessary to guide the deliberations and studies with a view to making it possible for States to stop the process of arming themselves, and perhaps to reduce the arms race.

We believe there are more possibilities for international security through the United Nations now than before -- because firstly we have now the universality of the United Nations. We also have the presence and the participation of all five big Powers in the United Nations -- an important factor towards international security in the United Nations. Secondly, we are in a period of détente, and in this period of détente we ought to be able to see a possibility of establishing international security through the United Nations.

May I add that the Charter provides for international security. In Chapter VII it provides for a Security Council which decides upon breaches of the peace or other forms of aggression, and the means to stop them. And it further fully provides for the implementation of Security Council decisions in 12 consecutive articles. The need for implementation of Security Council resolutions, through Chapter VII, has been reaffirmed in the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security, unanimously adopted in 1970, which spells out specifically, in paragraph 9, such need for implementation of Security Council resolutions through the procedures provided in the aforesaid Chapter VII of the Charter.

If more practically effective provisions for implementation are found in any study to be necessary, such as a permanent United Nations force -- a token force -- to interpose between nations in situations of conflict, or threatened conflict, relevant additions to Chapter VII may be made without the need of revising the Charter.

The report of the Secretary-General speaks of the need for basic review. Such review surely implies basic measures, and I hope that this statement, made in all humility, may be considered in that light.

The CHAIRMAN: I would invite the representative of Cyprus and the sponsors of the draft resolution to consult on these suggestions or amendments, since the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.727 is one of the drafts on which we may take action on Friday, and I hope that an agreement can be reached before then.

I shall now call on representatives wishing to speak in exercise of their right of reply.

Mr. MEERBURG (Netherlands): Referring to the statement made by the representative of Sri Lanka this afternoon in which he said, as I understood it, that the Western European maritime countries did not respond to the letter sent by the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean to the major maritime users of the Indian Ocean, I want to state that the Netherlands did in fact respond to the said letter, and not negatively either. I refer to paragraph 26 of the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean (A/10029).

Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): I should like to refer to the three statements which we have heard successively this afternoon from the representatives of three nuclear-weapon States. Chronologically they were the representative of the United States, the representative of the United Kingdom, and the representative of France. Recalling the Bible's admonition that the last shall be the first, I shall begin by referring to what Mr. de Guiringaud said.

I must say that I would have been very pleased if the statements of the other two representatives had, on some points, maintained the clarity and logical exposition which were undeniably present in what the representative of France said. My delegation was, in fact, most pleased with what he said, and I shall quote him in French so that there will be no danger of any misunderstanding when he affirmed that:

(Spoke in French)

"It goes without saying -- but it is even better to say so -- that the French Government fully recognizes the right of States of a given geographical region to form denuclearized zones." (Supra, p. 57)

(continued in Spanish)

And then, a little later on, he said:

(spoke in French)

"We cannot be opposed, therefore, to the principle underlying the establishment of zones within which the participating Governments would undertake not to acquire nuclear weapons". (Ibid.)

(continued in Spanish)

Let us hope that in future statements the representatives of the other nuclear-weapon States will be able to express themselves with equal clarity in this respect because since 1963 -- that is, for 12 years -- we have been striving here in the First Committee for a total absence of ambiguity in respect of this fundamental question.

The representative of France then went on to tell us that he wished to make four comments. The first was that the initiative for creating denuclearized zones should come from the States of the zones and should be accepted by all the States concerned. That is self-evident. It is one of the basic requirements; it is one of the few on which the experts agreed at Geneva and on which there was consensus, as I mentioned yesterday, and it is the first basic element which appears in our draft definition.

There then followed a second comment, with the spirit of which my delegation is in complete agreement, and I think that the delegations of France and Mexico could agree on wording to express that idea in such a way that there would be no room for doubt. He said:

"... States which form a nuclear-weapon-free zone are ... free to determine among themselves any arrangements they may agree to; there cannot be, in our view, any standard arrangement of a binding nature".

(Supra, p. 58-60)

I said that my delegation could agree completely with the spirit of this provision, but were we to take this comment literally it could be interpreted to mean that States establishing a nuclear-free zone could be free to establish an agreement that did not require the total absence of nuclear weapons; and this, to my delegation, would seem incompatible with the very idea of a nuclear-weapon-free zone. That is why I said that I am certain that if we made an effort to put this idea into the most specific form possible, there would be no difficulty in our two delegations' being able to agree fully on the letter as well as the spirit.

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

What Ambassador de Guiringaud told us to the effect that in his opinion there cannot be a standing arrangement of a binding nature, shows why it would not be possible to have a definition as detailed and specific as the representative of the United States, Ambassador Martin, seems to want. It is for the same reason that the experts in Geneva said that there are many characteristics which vary from one case to another, and that accordingly, a pragmatic and flexible criterion would have to be used in each case and rigid, inflexible definitions could not be adopted.

The third observation acquaints us with the viewpoint that the French Government will take into consideration, as was stated, as a factor in making its assessment, that is to say, the presence within such zones of all the militarily important Powers in the region concerned. I believe that Ambassador de Guiringaud was quite right in clothing his observation with the necessary flexibility; for we could cite an example, that of the only nuclear-free zone involving densely populated territories, namely the one established under the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which, fortunately, has won the support of the French Government, but in which, unfortunately, France cannot boast of having complied with this requirement.

The fourth observation seems to us fully warranted and very sensible. In accord with that observation, if the French delegation were asked, in a given case involving the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone, that, as stated there, it give a preliminary view, the French Government would wish, at the same time, to receive -- and here I read from the text that was distributed to us --

"... specific information on the territorial area of application and the planned limits of the zone concerned".

I repeat that this wish is sensible and justified, and it is obvious that when the matter of the zone came before the General Assembly -- if not before, but at the latest when the instrument establishing the zone came before the General Assembly -- the delegation of France would have ample opportunity to obtain all the data it might need in this respect.

Having completed my comments on these four observations, and continuing in my examination of the French text, I should like to refer to a few more concerning the consequences flowing from what had been set forth. The first observation is that the denuclearization régime set up under a treaty could not affect the status of territories under French sovereignty that might be geographically included within the denuclearized zone. This obviously is the case. This is precisely why, because of the conviction of the States parties to the Tlatelolco Treaty, the inclusion of those territories for which France has the international responsibility and which are located within the zone envisaged in the Tlatelolco Treaty, such denuclearization can be achieved only through a commitment freely accepted by the Government of France. And precisely for that reason, I repeat, we States parties, meeting at the General Conference of the Organization for the Military Denuclearization of Latin America and, later on, here in the Assembly last year, by means of a joint resolution, succeeded in having the Assembly adopt our proposal to invite France, as in the case of the United States, to sign and ratify Additional Protocol I of the Treaty.

With regard to the question of the obligations of nuclear-weapon States in respect of nuclear-free zones in general that are recognized as such by the General Assembly, I wish to deal with this point later when I speak about the statement made by the representative of the United States, since this is a point on which it seems to me that what I say will be applicable to the three statements.

First of all -- and this applies principally to the statement of the representative of the United States -- it seems to me that draft definition I, which the co-sponsors of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.724 have submitted to the consideration of this Committee, is a draft definition that is in keeping with the generally accepted requirements for any definition. The purpose of a definition is to set forth those essential elements that are common to all the subjects, institutions or organs that one is trying to define. A definition is not an exhaustive catalogue of the characteristics or requirements that are to be met; for that purpose there are comprehensive studies like the one requested by the Assembly last year.

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

That is why our definition includes -- as I said yesterday -- the four basic elements on which a consensus was achieved -- and God knows how difficult it was to achieve a consensus in that Ad Hoc Group of experts.

But there was a consensus on the four following basic elements, which I listed yesterday:

First, the initiative for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone must come from one or several of the States which are to make up that zone. So far I have not heard any objection to that criterion.

Secondly, the constitutive element should be -- and here again the experts agreed -- a treaty or convention freely entered into, and it is obvious -- as the representative of France quite rightly emphasized today -- that we cannot impose participation on any State within the zone.

Thirdly, the status of the zone to be defined by the instrument -- that is to say, the treaty or the convention -- must be one of total absence of nuclear weapons.

Fourthly, the instrument should also include -- and I have not heard any objection to this either -- an international system of verification and control to ensure compliance with the obligations flowing from this status.

The fifth basic element of the definition, on which -- and I was clear on this too yesterday -- there was no consensus among the experts but where most of the experts agreed, is that the Assembly should in due course be made cognizant of and pronounce itself on any proposed nuclear-weapon-free zone. And why? For the same reason that I mentioned yesterday that it is obvious that if, as the experts said -- and these are their words -- the

"circumstances in different regions vary so widely that a pragmatic and flexible approach would need to be adopted in each case", (A/10027/Add.1, p.69) we have to think of a body with international authority and it will be that body which will tell us whether the conditions in this case, in its opinion -- in the opinion of the Assembly -- exist, if these conditions have been met in a manner in which the international community considers that that can be a nuclear-weapon-free zone within the proper meaning of the term.

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

There is no other choice: either we allow a nuclear Power to decide whether or not that Power thinks that this is a nuclear-weapon-free zone or, if that is not the case, it will have to be the General Assembly.

Of course -- and I shall deal with this when I speak of the second definition -- that does not in any way mean, as has been alleged here -- and I quote the words used by Ambassador Martin -- that

(spoke in English)

"... there is absolutely no justification in the United Nations Charter or international law for arguing that 'endorsement' or 'recognition' by the General Assembly can be either a necessary or a sufficient condition for entry into force of a nuclear-weapon-free zone or for the assumption of obligations towards the zone by States not located in the region." (supra, p. 31')

(continued in Spanish)

Nobody has suggested that, but I repeat that I shall come back on this point when I discuss the second definition.

As regards the first, I merely wish to add that the purpose of having the General Assembly state its views on the subject is to give the States of the third world some support as they try to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones. What we have heard here, above all in the first of the three statements, is confirmation of what I said yesterday, which I should like now to repeat before I turn away from the subject of the first definition. Referring to the study of the experts, I said, inter alia, the following:

"Throughout the chapter the reader is aware of the attempts -- more or less disguised -- by some Governments to discourage or restrict the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones. Thus, reference is made to the indispensable requirement that 'suitable conditions exist for the creation of such zones' (A/10027/Add.1, annex I, p. 38), conditions which are subsequently described as 'feasible'. We are told that:

"Several experts pointed out that there may be regions in which nuclear-weapon-free zones are impracticable or where their creation may not improve the security of the States of the area.'" (Ibid., p. 39)

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

"It is stated that 'it was argued by some experts that the reduction of tension must precede the creation of a truly effective nuclear-weapon-free zone'. (Ibid., p. 40)

"We are informed of the belief of other members of the Ad Hoc Group that 'nuclear-weapon-free zones may not be appropriate in all areas'." (Ibid.) (2097th meeting, p. 4)

It is, I repeat, to protect the States of the third world from these attempts at obstructionism that the first definition that we propose in our draft resolution would be most useful.

I come now to what has been said here concerning the second definition. I shall read out a paragraph from the statement of the representative of the United States in this respect, and I shall read it out in English, in the language in which it was written:

(spoke in English)

"The proposed definition of the nuclear-weapon-free zone concept asserts that a basic requirement for a zone is its recognition as such by the General Assembly. That assertion has very serious implications." (supra, p. 28-30)

(continued in Spanish)

Let us see what these "very serious implications" are. It seems as if we are nearing some sort of catastrophe. Let us see what follows:

(spoke in English)

"It states, in effect, that an agreement negotiated among a group of States does not become valid and cannot enter into force without the approval of this body." (Ibid.)

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

(continued in Spanish)

I hope that Ambassador Martin, whose objectivity I know well, will reach the conclusion, after considering the three lines which I have just read out, that the experts who drafted this perhaps did not have enough time to consider our proposal carefully. We believe that this is merely tilting at imaginary windmills. We never said anything of the kind. I do not think anyone could point to any part of our proposal where we maintain that a negotiated agreement among a group of States:

(spoke in English)

"... does not become valid and cannot enter into force without the approval of this body." (Supra., p. 28-30)

(continued in Spanish)

Then there is another paragraph. Let me continue reading:

(spoke in English)

"The draft resolution goes even further in saying:

"'In every case of a nuclear-weapon-free zone that has been recognized as such by the General Assembly, nuclear-weapon States shall have the following obligations ...'

"That says that the General Assembly has the power to impose upon States binding commitments -- commitments, indeed, that might fundamentally affect their security interests." (Ibid.)

(continued in Spanish)

Those undoubtedly were the "serious implications".

(spoke in English)

"But the General Assembly does not have the authority to impose such obligations either on parties to a nuclear-weapon-free zone arrangement or on outside States. The assumption of such obligations is necessarily a voluntary act of sovereignty, based on mutual agreement freely entered into among the States concerned.

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

"The General Assembly can make an important contribution to the process of establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones, both by providing a forum for consultations and by adopting resolutions that encourage States to work towards specific arrangements." (Ibid., p. 31)

(continued in Spanish)

I maintain that that is precisely what we want. That is precisely the contribution that we think the General Assembly can make.

(spoke in English)

"... by providing a forum for consultations and by adopting resolutions that encourage States to work towards specific arrangements." (Ibid.)

(continued in Spanish)

The Government of the United States can forget any misgiving it may have had about that interpretation. I do not know who is responsible for that interpretation. I do not think that with this document we would be creating

(spoke in English)

binding commitments on outside States.

(continued in Spanish)

Had that been our view, or our idea, we certainly would not have put in the provision that:

"The preceding obligations shall in each case be embodied in a solemn international instrument having full legally binding force, such as a treaty, a convention or a protocol, which shall be signed and ratified by all nuclear-weapon States." (A/C.1/L.724, p. 3)

There is thus no reason for any misgiving or concern on the part of the United States or the United Kingdom -- or on the part of the Soviet Union, whose representative, Ambassador Roschin, voiced a similar concern to me when we spoke informally after a recent lunch.

We the sponsors of this draft resolution have no illusions about the functions and powers of the General Assembly. We know that, at least for the present, in most cases -- not in all cases but in most -- the obligations deriving from General Assembly resolutions are recognized as having only moral authority; they are ethical and moral obligations and that the General Assembly can only be regarded as the spokesman of the conscience of mankind.

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

That is what we want; nothing more: a declaration by the General Assembly that what is said in the draft of definition II is well-founded from all points of view. For what are we saying in the draft of definition II? It says:

"In every case of a nuclear-weapon-free zone that has been recognized as such by the General Assembly," (A/C.1/L.724, p. 2)

That language is there so that States from which co-operation is being asked can have guarantees that action will not be taken lightly -- that they will not be told something is a nuclear-free zone when it is merely the result of a casual statement. That is why it is proposed here that the zones, in addition to meeting the other four requirements that I mentioned before, must meet this requirement, and be "recognized as such by the General Assembly".

And in such cases, what would the General Assembly be saying if it adopted this draft resolution? With the full weight of its moral responsibility it would be saying that nuclear-weapon States would have the following obligations. Do these constitute any great burden? Is there anything esoteric or mysterious here? Can they produce incalculable consequences?

Hardly. These are obligations that the General Assembly has been discussing for the past 15 years. These are obligations which have been included in many General Assembly resolutions -- which appear in Additional Protocol II of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, already signed and ratified by four nuclear-weapon States. What obligations are these? I must read them to you, as they appear in subparagraphs II.1 (a), (b) and (c).

"(a) to respect in all its parts the statute of total absence of nuclear weapons defined in the treaty or convention which serves as the constitutive instrument of the zone;

"(b) to refrain from contributing in any way to the performance in the territories forming part of the zone of acts which involve a violation of the aforesaid treaty or convention;

"(c) to refrain from using or threatening to use nuclear weapons against the States included in the zone." (Ibid., pp. 2 and 3)

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

For the three States which, together with the Soviet Union, possess the most advanced technology in the way of nuclear power -- those which have, in addition, a rich reserve of talents and resources of all kinds -- this proposal, circulated yesterday but published on 17 November, is not a new proposal. In essence it has been widely known ever since last August, when in Geneva it fell to me on behalf of my delegation to make a long statement and submit a working document in which these two definitions were included in almost the same form in which they appear here.

(Mr. García Robles, Mexico)

These three States have not adduced any arguments other than the ones which have been presented here this afternoon. I hope they will feel, when they read in the record tomorrow the statement that I have made today that the arguments which they put forward have been properly answered. That is why I hope also that the overwhelming majority of the membership here -- unfortunately it cannot be the entire membership because we have already heard that there will be a few negative votes -- will give its support to this draft resolution which is intended to promote and facilitate, in deeds and not just in words, the creation of nuclear-free zones. That is surely one of the most effective ways to protect non-nuclear States, to protect those States which do not possess those terrible weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. SCALABRE (France) (interpretation from French): It is rather late and I do not intend to exercise a right of reply. To do so would be to show a lack of appreciation for the great courtesy shown by the representative of Mexico. On the contrary I should like to thank him for having been kind enough to recognize that the statement made by Mr. de Guiringaud has certain qualities. I should also like to make some very brief comments on everything that he has just said.

First, it appears to me that, quite obviously, States may agree on anything they wish but it is equally true, obviously, that if they agree to the existence of nuclear weapons in a given region then that obviously would no longer continue to be a nuclear-free zone.

Secondly, the representative of Mexico referred to model arrangements and we agree that delegations might get down to the study of some of them. But what we cannot agree with is that any agreed status should be presented as having any binding character, either directly or indirectly.

Thirdly, I should like to revert to our attitude on the Treaty of Tlatelolco. We said at the very outset that it would be impossible for us to sign Protocol I for reasons which we have often stated. On the contrary, we have, after very careful consideration, signed Protocol II, without this in any way being

(Mr. Scalabre, France)

construed as a precedent for other zones but simply because we were mindful of the specific conditions obtaining to Latin America.

Finally, I would say that my delegation naturally respects consensus and agrees with a certain number of the proposals reached by the experts who drew up the report which the Committee now has before it. However, my delegation considers itself bound only by the consensus or majorities with which France has associated itself.

To conclude, I should like to express my delegation's full admiration for the devotion and learning with which Ambassador Garcia Robles has served this cause, the importance of which France is fully aware and has so stated. He may rest assured that in us he will always find negotiating partners of goodwill, whatever votes we cast.

Mr. MARTIN (United States of America): I have listened with a great deal of care and attention to the eloquent, comprehensive and very interesting statement of my colleague Ambassador Garcia Robles. At first flush I do not think he has answered my problems, but I note that the hour is late and I do not think it would be doing justice to his virtuoso performance if I did not study his remarks before taking a decision as to whether or not I reply. Therefore, with your permission, Mr. Chairman, I reserve my right to reply to his statement.

The CHAIRMAN: I should like to announce that Grenada has become a co-sponsor of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/L.727.

As members of the Committee know, on Friday we will be taking a vote on some draft resolutions already before us. I believe that we can also act on the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean. If there is no objection we will include item 39 for decision on Friday.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN: Tomorrow we have no meeting scheduled for the afternoon as members know, but I should like to know whether any delegations are ready to speak tomorrow morning in order to introduce any draft resolutions, make statements or exercise their rights of reply. I see none. In that case I am compelled to cancel tomorrow's meeting.

The meeting rose at 6.50 p.m.